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Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the work of its first regular session of 2010

(12-14 January 2010)*

Contents

		Page
I.	Organization of the session	2
	A. Opening statement of the outgoing President	2
	B. Election of officers of the Executive Board	2
	C. Opening statements by the President and Executive Director	2
	D. Adoption of the agenda	4
II.	Deliberations of the Executive Board	4
	A. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council	4
	B. UNICEF programme cooperation	7
	C. Private fundraising: 2010 workplan and proposed budget	8
	D. Report on the implementation of the UNICEF cost recovery policy	9
	E. Follow-up to Executive Board decision 2009/20 on the biennial support budget for 2010-2011	10
	F. Update on implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards	11
	G. Pledging event	12
	H. Other matters	13
	I. Adoption of draft decisions	13
	J. Closing statements by the Executive Director and the President	13

* The present document is an advance version of the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the first regular, annual and second regular sessions of 2010, to be issued as Parts I, II and III, respectively. These reports will be issued in final form as *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No. 14* (E/2010/34/Rev.1-E/ICEF/2010/7/Rev.1).

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I. Organization of the session

A. Opening statement of the outgoing President

1. The President of the Executive Board for 2009, H.E. Mr. Oumar Daou, delivered a farewell statement, thanking delegations and the secretariat for their close cooperation throughout his presidency. He paid tribute to the Executive Director for her excellent leadership of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Special praise was devoted to her commitment to Africa and to the fight to end violence against women, poverty and disease, notably HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. He said that in supporting a culture of excellence at UNICEF, she had helped the organization to achieve positive results and to further strengthen its credibility. Noting that the Executive Board session was taking place less than two months after the twentieth commemoration of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, he commended UNICEF for progress made in protecting and promoting the rights of children. At the same time, he emphasized that much more needed to be done in promoting children's rights in the areas of child survival, protection and development. More work was also needed, he said, in protecting the planet from the effects of climate change, especially on the most vulnerable populations.

B. Election of officers of the Executive Board

2. The Executive Board elected as President H. E. Dr. Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations; and as Vice-Presidents, H. E. Ms. Sanja Štiglic, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the United Nations; H. E. Mr. Boniface G. Chidyausiku, Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations; Mr. Gustavo Alvarez, Deputy Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations; and Mr. Pål Klouman Bekken, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations.

C. Opening statements by the President and Executive Director

3. In his opening remarks, the President of the Executive Board for 2010 said that taking up his new office was an honour for him both personally and as a citizen of his country. He thanked the Executive Director and her team for their dynamism, expertise, skill and commitment, which have allowed UNICEF to enhance its leadership role in promoting the rights and well-being of children. Recalling the words of the Secretary-General, he praised the Executive Director for being "a champion of United Nations coherence and a strong voice for children as well as Millennium Development Goals implementation. Her legacy is an organization that is financially and intellectually strong, as well as equipped to meet the challenges children face in the twenty-first century." He called upon the Executive Board to pay homage to her by continuing her legacy of good work.

4. Summarizing data highlighted in the UNICEF flagship publication *The State of the World's Children 2009: Maternal and Newborn Health*, the President emphasized the work ahead in improving maternal, newborn and child health and in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It was crucial, he emphasized, to act

now to protect children from threats of security, armed conflict, the impact of the global and financial crisis, natural disasters, climate change, food insecurity, cross-border trafficking and the 'modern slave trade'. The Executive Board has a strong role to play in addressing the twin issues of poverty and sustainable development and protecting the world's most vulnerable children.

5. The Executive Director, in her opening remarks, said that UNICEF is guided by the urgency of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, she noted, UNICEF has worked to strengthen its results-based focus in order to achieve the Goals and fulfil the rights of children in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. To leverage greater results, UNICEF has worked to deploy resources where the burdens and needs are the greatest, to improve its coordination and collaboration with others, and to help Governments build their capacities and make informed decisions based on the best possible evidence and practices.

6. Summarizing the key challenges facing children, she highlighted progress made by UNICEF and its partners in key areas. These include health and nutrition and improved food security, integrated primary health care for children and women, the expansion of child health interventions, and support for gender equality in education and child-friendly schools. This work also involved the creation of environments protecting children against all forms of exploitation and abuse and the forging of innovative partnerships to address sexual violence against girls and women. In HIV/AIDS, UNICEF helped to increase coverage for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and treatment of paediatric AIDS. Other significant areas of progress include the establishment of more systematic humanitarian operations; the revitalization of communication for behaviour change; and the expansion of youth participation programmes, including participation in recent climate change and Junior 8/G8 forums. To further improve development outcomes, UNICEF had created an innovation unit featuring the use of new technology and innovative products, such as SMS technology to track malnutrition and monitor supply.

7. Improvements to management and administration include the establishment of an office of research and the expansion of knowledge management systems, combined with more strategic use of evaluations that are better-integrated into programmes. Among achievements in human resources were the launch of a new e-recruitment system, the establishment of an assessment programme for representatives, and the continuation of the New and Emerging Talent Initiative. Regarding resources, despite the recent downturn, UNICEF has continued to improve its financial position, thanks in large part to the support of its donors. Accountability mechanisms have been strengthened, audit compliance has improved, and the office of ethics has been established. Critical to all this work is the increasingly strategic approach to collaboration with others. UNICEF has been a strong supporter of United Nations system-wide coherence, and of effective partnerships with United Nations agencies and the World Bank and other international financial institutions. Efforts have also focused on enhancing partnerships and collaborations with non-governmental organizations, including through the simplification of processes and procedures. UNICEF, in concert with its National Committees, continues to strengthen financial and non-monetary ties with the private sector. Strategic discussion has also centred on key emerging issues that will continue to affect the lives of children and women: climate change, population

growth, economic trends that include the expanding illicit economy, and technological innovation applied to development.

8. As a result of these and other efforts, the Executive Director said, UNICEF today is a stronger rights-based and results-driven organization that will continue to effectively advance the agenda for children around the world. Speaking of her tenure as Executive Director, which began in 2005, she said the dedicated staff members of UNICEF were one reason why her years at the organization have been among the most rewarding of her life. She thanked the Executive Board for its leadership, guidance and support.

9. In the discussion during this and other agenda items, delegations praised the Executive Director for her dedicated leadership and the results she helped UNICEF to achieve. Among the results highlighted were an unwavering commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals; the strong support for food security, protection of children's rights, gender equality and the fight to end violence against women and children; specific contributions, with partners, to global advances in child health, nutrition, education, HIV/AIDS, emergency humanitarian assistance and other areas of the medium-term strategic plan; the launching of the organizational improvement initiatives; a sharper focus on achieving, monitoring and reporting on results; the drive for strengthened and more strategic partnerships and collaborative relationships; a steady steering of the organization through the global economic downturn; and continued support for United Nations system-wide coherence.

10. Turning to the issue of recruitment for the post of the new Executive Director, three delegations called for an open, transparent and merit-based process and asked the President to ensure that the Executive Board was kept informed of progress during the recruitment process.

D. Adoption of the agenda

11. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2010/1) for the session.

12. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 48 observer delegations, including 1 United Nations body, 1 intergovernmental organization, 3 international organizations, 3 non-governmental organizations, and 3 National Committees for UNICEF.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

13. The annual report to the Economic and Social Council for 2009 (E/ICEF/2010/3) was introduced by the Director of Governance, United Nations and Multilateral Affairs, who also presented a report on recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (E/ICEF/2009/6) included under this agenda item.

14. The Director stated that the report responded directly to General Assembly resolution 62/208 of 19 December 2007 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and to the expectations set out in Executive Board decision 2009/2. This decision had requested UNICEF to provide more robust qualitative assessments and analysis of progress made, difficulties encountered and lessons learned.

15. The Director noted that UNICEF had developed an action plan in response to resolution 62/208, reporting that as of September 2009, 96 per cent of planned actions were completed, under way or of an ongoing nature. In 2009, she said, UNICEF had made notable progress in gender equality mainstreaming, capacity development and the harmonization of business processes. In addition to summarizing the key elements of the report, she gave a brief update on the financial situation of UNICEF as of 31 December 2009, indicating that both regular resources and other resources would register declines.

16. Delegations welcomed the report, emphasizing its improved assessment and analysis of results and challenges and lessons learned; its harmonization with the reports of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other United Nations entities; and its closer alignment with the comprehensive policy review. UNICEF was requested to continue to improve these three elements in future reports.

17. Many delegations commented on funding and partnerships. Speakers welcomed the greater emphasis of UNICEF on more strategic partnerships. Such partnerships included relationships with emerging donors, including those in middle-income and developing countries; global public-private partnerships; the Bretton Woods institutions; the private sector, and other donors; both within and outside the United Nations. Strengthening partnerships, it was noted, was important for delivering aid more effectively and efficiently, and for ensuring social protection, especially in the context of the global economic crisis. UNICEF was asked whether its partnerships with the international financial institutions would go beyond support for emergencies to fund long-term development.

18. One delegation said that partnerships with community-based organizations and national civil society organizations were a core strength of UNICEF. Other delegations stressed that stronger partnership in the areas of health, nutrition and food security, and young child survival and development was essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and addressing the challenges of the economic downturn. In this respect, one speaker highlighted the key participation of UNICEF in the 2009 United Nations Ministerial Conference on the Social Impact of the Economic Crisis in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Turkey, which took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

19. Several delegations said that partnerships at all levels should intensify the focus on protection issues, including the prevention of trafficking of children, violence against women, and female genital cutting. One speaker suggested that the Executive Board mark the upcoming anniversary of the adoption of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

20. A number of delegations expressed concern over the growing imbalance of regular (core) resources and other (non-core) resources. Regular resources, it was noted, should be used to assist the poorest countries and the most vulnerable

populations. Additional information was requested on work with the private sector in the new 'non-monetary' modes of cooperation, and on the workings of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund.

21. UNICEF was praised for its solid contributions to national capacity development and development effectiveness. In particular, UNICEF was commended for its initiatives expanding the access of national partners to development knowledge -- especially through the establishment of streamlined data collection systems — and in improving capacities in evaluation. One speaker requested information on how UNICEF has assisted middle-income countries in dealing with the issue of inequalities.

22. Several delegations stressed that capacity development should emphasize country ownership, incorporate a human rights approach, and integrate gender equality. This work in human rights, it was emphasized, needed to include cooperation with both national institutions and civil society in building capacity for child protection. Referring to the 2009 desk review of UNICEF efforts in capacity development, several delegations asked how the findings would be addressed by UNICEF management.

23. UNICEF was also recognized for its contributions to South-South cooperation, with one speaker suggesting that UNICEF further systematize the varied initiatives and identify good practices for sharing. Another speaker singled out the important cooperation with the Organization of American States on birth registration.

24. A number of delegations emphasized the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment and of the mainstreaming of gender to the work of UNICEF, congratulating the organization for progress achieved. Special note was made of the initiative to examine the implications of gender equality in humanitarian operations. Emphasizing that the rights of children and women were inextricably linked, delegations expressed support for ensuring closer synergy in implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

25. Speakers underscored the need to implement the recommendations of the 2008 evaluation of gender policy implementation in UNICEF, including through training and learning opportunities for staff, the conducting of gender reviews and the creation of gender assessment tools. It was essential, speakers noted, to track implementation on the ground. Delegations recommended that UNICEF coordinate its efforts more closely with those of other United Nations organizations, particularly the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and continue to play a strong role in supporting revision of the United Nations gender architecture and the planning for the United Nations gender entity.

26. Delegations highlighted the unique role UNICEF has to play in ensuring a smooth transition from humanitarian relief to development, and in post-conflict peacebuilding. UNICEF was commended, in particular, for supporting the implementation of the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict. Support was equally expressed for the contribution of UNICEF to the following areas: disaster risk reduction at the policy and field operations levels; reform of the United Nations humanitarian system; protection of children and women, with UNICEF acting as lead agency in the protection cluster; and the common needs assessment initiative.

27. Praising UNICEF for its contribution to United Nations system-wide coherence, speakers called upon UNICEF to continue to play an active role in this initiative, both at headquarters and in the field. It was necessary, they said, to prioritize important areas such as Delivering as One, joint programming, and simplification and harmonization. It was imperative, delegations said, to harmonize procedures in areas such as security and banking.

28. UNICEF was acknowledged for its efforts as Chair of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to strengthen the resident coordinator system; for its participation in the Integration Steering Committee and integrated mission planning process; and for its collaboration with other funds, programmes and agencies on common formats for reports to Governments. It was also noted that UNICEF had made more progress than other organizations of the United Nations system in adopting the new One Enterprise Resource Planning system.

29. Though they recognized good progress achieved, delegations called for even more inter-agency collaboration. It was vital, they noted, to further harmonize assistance for better outcomes in areas such as health, including polio eradication, HIV/AIDS, and child protection. One speaker suggested that UNICEF intensify its cooperation in particular with the World Food Programme.

30. Underscoring the key role of effective monitoring and evaluation in the work of UNICEF, one speaker commended the efforts of the organization to strengthen knowledge and capacities in evaluation, including through the conducting of training courses. Another speaker praised UNICEF for its utilization of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in improving policies and programmes.

31. The annual report will be submitted, together with a summary of comments made during the discussion, to the Economic and Social Council for consideration at the 2010 substantive session.

32. The Executive Board adopted decision 2010/1 (see compendium of decisions in document E/ICEF/2010/5).

B. UNICEF programme cooperation

33. The Executive Board approved, on a no-objection basis, revised country programme documents for Argentina, Guatemala and Uganda. In accordance with Executive Board decisions 2002/4 and 2006/19, the Executive Board had discussed the draft country programme documents for these programmes at the 2009 second regular session, approving the aggregate indicative budgets for each country programme. Taking into consideration comments from the Executive Board, as appropriate, and after consultation with the respective Governments, the draft documents had been revised and had been posted on the UNICEF website, along with revised results matrices, within six weeks of the session. The Executive Board was requested to approve the revised country programme documents on a no-objection basis unless at least five members had informed the Secretariat in writing that they wished to bring a particular programme to the Executive Board for further discussion. As the Secretariat had not received any such requests, the country programme documents were approved.

34. Also discussed under this agenda item was the recommendation for approval of additional regular resources for approved country programmes. The Director of Programmes introduced the recommendation (E/ICEF/2010/P/L.1 and Corr.1) for the allocation of an additional $57,137,000 in regular resources for approved country programmes. The recommendation was approved by the Executive Board in decision 2010/2 (see compendium of decisions in document E/ICEF/2010/5).

C. Private fundraising: 2010 workplan and proposed budget

35. The Director of Private Fundraising and Partnerships (PFP) presented the report (E/ICEF/2010/AB/L.1).

36. Delegations praised PFP and the National Committees for UNICEF for the better-than-planned results for 2009, achieved during a difficult economic and financial environment, in part by the limiting of expenditures. One delegation welcomed the organization's cautious approach regarding the 2010 proposed budget.

37. A number of delegations, noting the continued decline in income from cards and gifts sales and in corporate giving, expressed appreciation for the increased efforts in private fundraising. Speakers especially welcomed the greater focus on regular pledge donors as an income growth area. Several delegations expressed support for the proposed increase in investment funds, as these funds provided significant support to National Committees to expand the engagement of pledge donors and thus to generate a more steady and predictable stream of income. Other delegations said there was room for further growth in corporate donations and support, and called on UNICEF to further promote corporate social responsibility and to work with National Committees to finalize guidelines for corporate partnerships. One delegation recommended that UNICEF strengthen its fundraising for humanitarian crisis situations.

38. Several delegations welcomed the business rationalization in cards and gifts as being well structured and improving efficiency. It was noted that the process was difficult but necessary, not only to improve net income from the sales but also to maintain the strength of the UNICEF brand.

39. A number of delegations commented on the new partnership model with retail partners, stating that they hoped it would have a positive impact on income and improve cost effectiveness in cards and gifts sales. One delegation suggested that UNICEF continue to strengthen its strategic partnerships with the National Committees and to concentrate on the potential of new markets, especially in developing countries. PFP was asked about its experiences in countries where the new partnership model was implemented.

40. In response, the Director noted that, while final sales figures were not yet available for 2009, various partnerships with Hallmark and Pictura had enabled UNICEF cards and gifts to be sold in retail stores for the first time, potentially generating additional resources for UNICEF.

41. Replying to questions raised about the number of posts in the cards and gifts business, the Director said that despite the conversion of some contracts to regular posts, the number of staff had remained the same. Eventually, he said, rationalization would lead to a reduction in the number of posts.

42. Several speakers asked about whether the funding of the 2010 workplan would come from PFP activities or other programme support costs outside of PFP. The Director responded that all elements of the workplan were funded through the PFP budget; only child rights advocacy and support were financed through the support budget.

43. The Executive Board adopted decision 2010/3 (see compendium of decisions in document E/ICEF/2010/5).

D. Report on the implementation of the UNICEF cost recovery policy

44. The Comptroller introduced the report (E/ICEF/2010/AB/L.3), which was presented in conjunction with agenda item 7, follow-up to Executive Board decision 2009/20 on the biennial support budget for 2010-2011.

45. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the clarity of the report. UNICEF was commended for the fact that, as 2006-2007 cost recovery figures showed, regular resources had not subsidized support costs for programmes funded by other resources. It was emphasized that more work needs to be done to achieve a systematic and common approach to cost recovery.

46. Delegations inquired whether the methodology for calculating cost recovery was sustainable and requested figures for 2008. One speaker suggested that the methodology cover all costs. Another asked which exceptions UNICEF had granted to the recovery rate of 7 per cent.

47. It was further suggested that financial reporting on administrative expenses be given on a regular basis; that regular annual financial reporting on actual support budget expenditures be presented in a format similar to the organization's resource plan; and that cost recovery discussions take place during the review and approval of the 2012-2013 biennial support budget.

48. One speaker requested UNICEF to evaluate the impact of the cost recovery on programmes in the field on a case-by-case basis. Another speaker requested that a study be conducted on other ways of channelling non-core resources to programmes, including through the use of income from countries benefiting from programmes. More information was also requested on the work on cost recovery by the High-level Committee on Management.

49. Thanking the delegations for their comments, the Comptroller assured them that UNICEF supports the Executive Board position that regular resources should not subsidize support costs for other resource funding of programmes. Responding to the several questions on classification, definitions and methodology, he explained that direct costs are defined as costs that are directly traceable to project activities and programmes in fulfilment of the mandate of UNICEF. Indirect costs are costs not directly attributable to specific projects and programmes. Fixed costs, which include management costs, are incurred by UNICEF as part of having a minimum programme presence in a country. He further explained that the only expenses charged to core resources are management, administration and the support costs required for running operations and maintaining the organization. Costs subject to recovery are those additional incremental costs (so-called variable indirect costs) incurred when other resources are applied to programmes.

50. Replying to questions about exceptions granted by UNICEF to the recovery rate of 7 per cent, the Comptroller said that the following exceptions had been made, in accordance with the cost recovery policy: two donors had received a reduction of 1 per cent for their contributions of over $40 million; and a number of thematic fund donors had received a rate of 5 per cent. He emphasized that any funds recovered in excess of the standard recovery rates are ploughed back into regular resources for programme use.

51. The Comptroller confirmed that the cost recovery methodology was sustainable, and he shared with the delegations some preliminary calculations for 2008. The figures for 2008, he noted, had been excluded from the report because the 2008-2009 biennial budget had not yet been closed at the time the report was completed.

52. On the question of harmonization, the Comptroller explained that UNICEF would continue to work with UNDP and UNFPA on cost definitions and classification, following the steps outlined in the road map to an integrated budget. A very comprehensive, transparent and harmonized methodology was expected to emerge from this process, he said.

53. Deputy Executive Director Mr. Omar Abdi added that inter-agency work on cost classification would give Member States a better understanding of cost definitions. He emphasized that no matter how costs were defined, the operating costs of UNICEF engagement in more than 100 countries would continue to rise. He suggested that the solution to these rising costs was not to charge more recovery to other resources but rather to look at different business models for working in various countries, including those with small programmes.

E. Follow-up to Executive Board decision 2009/20 on the biennial support budget for 2010-2011

54. The Comptroller introduced the joint information note of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF on the road map to an integrated budget. This road map outlines the improvements to be made to the biennial support budget for 2011-2012 as a step towards a single, integrated budget for UNICEF in 2014, harmonized with that of the other two organizations.

55. The Director of Policy and Practice introduced the update of the results matrix of the biennial support budget for 2010-2011 (E/ICEF/2010/CRP.3). The Director noted that a performance report on the results of the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 and the biennial support budget for 2010-2011 will be included in the annual report of the Executive Director to be presented at the 2010 annual session of the Executive Board.

56. Welcoming the road map, delegations commended its clarity and message of transparency. The process, they said, had satisfactorily incorporated continuous dialogue with the Executive Boards, consultations with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and references to the activities performed by the working group of the United Nations Development Group on cost recovery policy.

57. Speakers underscored the need for the integrated budget to be fully comprehensive, transparent, and results-based, with a fair distribution of operating

costs between core and non-core resources. It was noted that budget documents need to ensure comprehensive, transparent linkages to the strategic plans of the organizations. One speaker cited the need for financial reporting on actual support budget expenditures in the annual financial review, in a format similar to the resource plan.

58. For the sake of comparison across years, it was suggested that certain models in the budget be preserved in order to weigh results against indicators of efficiency — for example, a tracking of fixed and variable indirect costs. Noting that comparison among agencies was also important, one delegation requested that the joint report to be presented at the 2010 second regular session present a common methodology for treatment of cost categories for the support and programming budgets.

59. Regarding the biennial support budget for 2010-2011, several delegations praised the efforts of UNICEF to improve the results matrix, while suggesting that indicators could be further improved. Results frameworks, it was noted, need to contain 'smart' indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound, clearly linking the efforts of inputs to achieved results. Specifically, the emphasis should shift from activities undertaken to outcomes targeted. UNICEF was called upon to strengthen its results-based management and provide regular updates on progress made.

60. The Director responded that refining indicators was part of a continual learning process for UNICEF. The performance report to be given at the 2010 annual session would allow for an assessment of the viability of the indicators and of the progress in achieving targets. Targeted outcomes are increasingly used by UNICEF, especially at the country and regional office levels, where expected results are linked to the targets of the medium-term strategic plan and are included in office management plans.

61. Replying to a specific question on 'office management reports', the Director said that the reports, an assessment instrument introduced towards the end of 2009, cover a wide range of common operational indicators and key performance indicators in the medium-term strategic plan and the support budget.

62. Thanking delegations for their comments on the road map, the Comptroller expressed the steadfast commitment of UNICEF to working with UNDP and UNFPA towards an integrated budget.

F. Update on implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards

63. The Deputy Director (Accounting Services) of the Division of Financial and Administrative Management presented the update on the implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) (E/ICEF/2010/AB/L.2), summarizing progress in the four areas of transition: policy development, the first area of transition, is driving the activities of all other areas of transition. Policy positions have been established, and documents prepared, in all 16 key topics that were identified in the impact analysis completed in 2008. Discussions on these policy positions have begun with the external auditors. The second area of transition, change management, will be described in the implementation plan

commenced in January 2010 and will be implemented through activities that include communication and training, already started. Systems adaptation, the third area of transition, covers changes to business practices and is progressing in tandem with the roll-out of the new system of VISION-One ERP (Virtual Integrated System of Information-One Enterprise Resource Planning). The blueprint for systems development was completed in July 2009. The fourth area of transition, report preparation, commenced in 2009 via IPSAS-compliant financial statements, which will likely be revised as IPSAS implementation progresses, with full adoption planned for 2012.

64. One speaker applauded the cautious, phased introduction of IPSAS by UNICEF, saying that it will allow those in the field to adequately adapt to the new accounting and administrative modalities, and will allow UNICEF to more closely coordinate with governments and other entities during the transition. The speaker asked what impact the preparation of annual budgets, as opposed to interim or biannual budgets, will have on country programmes.

65. The Deputy Director responded that, while IPSAS will require annual financial statements, UNICEF will continue to present a biennial budget. The annual financial statements will include a reconciliation of budget to actual performance.

G. Pledging event

66. Immediately prior to the pledging event, the Executive Director gave an update on the crisis in Haiti following the 12 January earthquake and its aftermath, summarizing the immediate relief efforts of UNICEF and its partners. These efforts, she said, involve supplies and assistance focusing on children separated from their families.

67. The Permanent Representative of Haiti to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Léo Mérorès, described catastrophic conditions in the country. He conveyed the appreciation of Haiti for the sympathy expressed by the international community and for the immediate response of UNICEF, in coordination with the United Nations and other partners. He also deplored the heavy toll taken on United Nations staff in Haiti.

68. The President opened the eleventh annual pledging event, welcoming the participants. He emphasized that the ability of UNICEF to work effectively with national counterparts and other partners depended on the voluntary contributions of donors.

69. A total of 21 Government representatives expressed their support for UNICEF, with many of them acknowledging the dedication and achievements of the Executive Director as head of UNICEF. Donor representatives also expressed their solidarity with the people of Haiti suffering the devastating effects of the earthquake crisis, and pledged support through UNICEF and other organizations.

70. The amount pledged at the 2010 event totalled $283 million, compared with $186 million pledged at the 2009 event. The total pledges for regular resources for 2010 including pledges received during the United Nations Pledging Conference in November 2009, and pledges received outside of both pledging events, amount to $289 million (compared with $299 million in 2009) from 44 Governments. This

corresponds to 52 per cent of the target of $554 million for 2010 set out in the medium-term financial plan for 2009-2012 (E/ICEF/2009/AB/L.5).

71. During the event, five donors announced increases in their pledges for contributions for 2010: Australia, Belgium, Iceland, Slovenia, Spain, and United States of America. Donors who maintained their contribution for 2010 were China, Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Morocco, Norway, Portugal, Russian Federation and Uruguay.

72. Several donors acknowledged the work done by UNICEF at the country level. UNICEF was commended for its contributions to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, its contribution to United Nations system-wide coherence, and its organizational improvement initiatives.

73. The Executive Director expressed appreciation for the contributions and support that UNICEF received from Governments, National Committees for UNICEF, and the private sector. She thanked donors for their pledges to sustain or expand funding to UNICEF, especially during a time of scarce resources. The contributions, she said, allow UNICEF to continue to carry out its work around the world, to respond to crises, and to address the vulnerabilities of children.

74. A summary of pledges to regular resources may be found in document E/ICEF/2010/CRP.2.

H. Other matters

75. The President reported briefly on the recruitment process for the new UNICEF Executive Director, who is expected to take office in May 2010. At the request of three delegations, the President had met with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who outlined the steps of what will be a transparent process that will take place in consultation with the Executive Board. The President assured delegations that throughout the process he will keep the Bureau of the Executive Board and Executive Board members informed.

76. The Secretariat shared with the Executive Board the list of provisional agenda items for the 2010 annual session.

I. Adoption of draft decisions

77. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2010/1 through 2010/5 (see compendium of decisions in document E/ICEF/2010/5).

J. Closing statements by the Executive Director and the President

78. In her closing remarks, the Executive Director underscored the need for the continuing and collective support for the people of Haiti. She paid tribute to Mr. Alayew Abai, Comptroller, Mr. Claus Andreasen, Director of Internal Audit, and Mr. Philip O'Brien, Director of Private Fundraising and Partnerships, who will retire after many years of service to UNICEF. Praising her for her professionalism, commitment to UNICEF and excellent work with the Executive Board, the Executive Director also announced that Mrs. Kirsi Madi, Secretary of the Executive

Board, would soon take up her new position as Deputy Regional Director in the regional office of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

79. The Executive Director acknowledged the support expressed by delegations for the improvements UNICEF has made during her tenure. Saying that the faces and stories of the children she had met during her years at UNICEF would stay with her forever, she thanked the Executive Board and UNICEF staff and partners for their work in saving, protecting and improving the lives of the most vulnerable. Delegations gave her a standing ovation.

80. The President began his closing statements with an update on the emergency relief efforts of UNICEF in Haiti, praising UNICEF for its commitment to meeting the humanitarian needs.

81. The President summarized the key discussions that had taken place during the 2010 first regular session. He underscored the importance of the renewed commitments of Member States to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in the current global economic climate. He praised UNICEF for its efforts in supporting United Nations system-wide coherence, for implementing the triennial comprehensive policy review within the quadrennial framework, and for improving results-based reporting and analysis in the annual report to the Economic and Social Council.